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# TO AND IN GRANADA

BY WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

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THE train which leaves Seville at ten of a sunny morning is supposed to arrive in Granada at seven of a moonlight evening. This is a mistake; the moonlight is on time, but the train arrives at a quarter of nine. Still, if the day has been sunny the whole way and the moonlight is there at the end, no harm has really been done; and measurably the promise of the train has been kept.

## I

There was not a moment of the long journey over the levels of Andalusia which was not charming; when it began to be over the uplands of the last Moorish kingdom, it was richly impressive. The only thing I had against the landscape was the prevalence of olive orchards. I hailed as a relief the far-spreading stubble-fields where they opened, and I did not always resent the roadside planting of some sort of tall hedges which now and then hid the olives. But even olive orchards may vary their monotony by the spectacle of peasants on ladders gathering their fruit into wide-mouthed sacks, and occasionally their ranks of symmetrical green may be broken by the yellow and red of poplars and pomegranates around the pleasant farmsteads. The nearer we drew to Granada the pleasanter these grew, till in the famous Vega they thickly dotted the landscape with their brown roofs and white walls.

We had not this effect till we had climbed the first barrier of hills and began to descend on the thither side; but we had incident enough to keep us engaged without the picturesqueness. The beggars alone, who did not fail us at any station, were enough; for what could the most exacting tourist ask more than to be eating his luncheon under

the eyes of the children who besieged his car windows and protested their famine in accents which would have melted a heart of stone or of anything less obdurate than travel? We had always our brace of Civil Guards, who preserved us from bandits, but they left the beggars unmolested by getting out of the train next the station and pacing the platform, while the rabble of hunger thronged us on the other side. There was especially one boy who, after being compassionated in money for his misfortune, continued to fling his wooden leg into the air and wave it at our window by some masterly gymnastics; and there was another boy who kept lamenting that he had no mother, till, having duly feed and fed him, I suggested, "But you have a father?" Then, as if he had never seen the case in that light before, he was silent, and presently went away without further insistence on his bereavement.

## II

The laconic fidelity of my note-book enables me to recall here that the last we saw of Seville was the Cathedral and the Giralda, which the guide-books had promised us we should see first; that we passed some fields of alfalfa which the Moors had brought from Africa and the Spanish have carried to America; that in places men were plowing and that the plowed land was red; that the towns on the uplands in the distance were white and not gray or mud-colored, as in Castile; that the morning sky was blue, with thin, pale clouds; that the first station out was quaintly called Two Brothers, and that the loungers about it were plain, but kind-looking men-folk with good faces, some actually clean-shaven, and a woman with a white rose in her hair; that Two Brothers is a suburb of Seville, frequented in the winter, and has orange orchards about it; that farther on at one place the green of the fields, with a fine sense of color, spread up to the walls of a white farm; that there were hawks sailing in the blue air; that there were grotesque hedges of cactus and piles of crooked cactus logs; that there were many eucalyptus-trees; that there were plantations of young olives, as if never to let that all-pervading culture perish; that there were irregular mountain ranges on the right, but never the same kind of scenery on both sides of the track; that there was once a white cottage on a yellow hill and a pink villa with two towers; that there was a soli-

tary fig-tree near the road, and that there were vast lonely wheat-fields when there were not olive orchards.

Taking breath after one o'clock, much restored by our luncheon, my note-book remembers a gray-roofed, yellow-walled town, very suitable for a water-color, and just beyond it the first vineyard we had come to. Then there were pomegranate-trees, golden-leaved, and tall poplars pollarded plume fashion as in southern France; and in a field a herd of brown pigs feeding, which commended itself to observance, doubtless, as color in some possible word-painting. There now abounded pomegranates, figs, young corn, and more and more olives; and as if the old olives and young olives were not enough, the earth began to be pitted with holes dug for the olives which had not yet been planted.

At Bobadilla, the junction where an English railway company begins to get in its work and to animate the Spanish environment to unwonted enterprise, there was a varied luncheon far past our capacity. But when a Cockney voice asked over my shoulder, "Tea, sir?" I gladly closed with the proposition. "But you've put hot milk into it," I lamented. "I know it, sir. We 'ave no cold milk at Bobadilla," and instantly a baleful suspicion implanted itself which has since grown into an upas-tree of poisonous conviction: goat's milk does not keep well, and it was not only hot milk, but hot *goat's* milk which they were serving us at Bobadilla. However, there were admirable ham sandwiches, not of goat's flesh, at the other end of the room, and with these one could console oneself. There was also a commendable pancake whose honored name I never knew, but whose acquaintance I should be sorry not to have made; and all about Bobadilla there was an agreeable bustle, which we enjoyed the more when we made sure that we had changed into the right train for Granada and found in our compartment the charming young Swedish couple who had come with us from Seville.

### III

Thoroughly refreshed by the tea with hot goat's milk in it, by the genuine ham sandwiches and the pancakes, my note-book takes up the tale once more. It dwells upon the rich look of the land and the comfort of the farms contrasting with the wild desolation of the mountain ranges which now began to serrate the horizon; and I have no doubt that if I had then read that most charming of all

Washington Irving's Spanish studies, the story, namely, of his journey over quite the same way we had come seventy-five years later, my note-book would now abound in comment on the changed aspect of the whole landscape. Even as it is, I find it exclamatory over the wonder of the mountain coloring which it professes to have found green, brown, red, gray, and blue, but whether all at once or not it does not say. It is more definite as to the plain we were traversing, with its increasing number of white cottages, cheerfully testifying to the distribution of the land in small holdings, so different from the vast estates abandoned to homeless expanses of wheat-fields and olive orchards which we had been passing through. It did not appear on later inquiry that these small holdings were of peasant ownership, as I could have wished; they were tenant farms, but their neatness testified to the prosperity of the tenants, and their frequency cheered our way as the evening waned and the lamps began to twinkle from their windows. At a certain station, I am reminded by my careful mentor, the craggy mountain-tops were softened by the sunset pink, and that then the warm afternoon air began to grow cooler, and the dying day to empurple the uplands everywhere without abating the charm of the blithe cottages. It seems to have been mostly a very homelike scene, and where there was a certain stretch of woodland its loneliness was relieved by the antic feat of a goat lifting itself on its hind-legs to browse the olive leaves on their native bough. The thin air was ever more cooler, but never damp, and at times it relented and blew lulling in at our window. We made such long stops that the lights began to fade out of the farm windows, but kept bright in the villages, when at a station which we were so long in coming to that we thought it must be next to Granada, a Spanish gentleman got in with us; and though the prohibitory notice of *No Fumadores* stared him in the face, it did not stare him out of countenance; for he continued to smoke like a locomotive the whole way to our journey's end.

From time to time I meditated the words of a severe rebuke, but in the end I made him none, and I am now convinced that this was wise, for he probably would not have minded it, and as it was, when I addressed him some commonplace as to the time of our arrival he answered me in the same spirit, and then presently grew very courteously

communicative. He told me for one thing, after we had passed the mountain gates of the famous Vega and were making our way under the moonlight over the storied expanse, drenched with the blood of battles long ago, that the tall chimneys we began to see blackening the air with their volumed fumes were the chimneys of fourteen beet-root sugar factories belonging to the Duke of Wellington. Then I divined, as afterward I learned, that the lands devoted to this industry were part of the rich gift which Spain bestowed upon the Great Duke in gratitude for his services against the Napoleonic invasion. His present heir has imagined a benevolent use of his heritage by inviting the peasantry of the Vega to the culture of the sugar beet; but whether the enterprise was prospering I could not say; and I do not suppose any reader of mine will care so much for it as I did in the pour of the moonlight over the roofs and towers that were now becoming Granada, and quickening my dim old emotions to a youthful glow. At the station, which, in spite of Boabdil el Chico and Ferdinand and Isabel, was quite like every other railway station of southern Europe, we parted friends with our Spanish fellow-traveler, whom we left smoking and who is probably smoking still. Then we mounted with our Swedish friends into the omnibus of the hotel we had chosen and which began, after discreet delays, to climb the hill town toward the Alhambra through a commonplace-looking town gay with the lights of cafés and shops, and to lose itself in the more congenial darkness of narrower streets barred with moonlight. It was drawn by four mules, covered with bells and constantly coaxed and cursed by at least two drivers on the box, while a vigorous boy ran alongside and lashed their legs without ceasing till we reached the shelf where our hotel perched.

## IV

I had taken the precaution to write for rooms, and we got the best in the house, or if not that the best we could wish at a price which I could have wished much less, till we stepped out upon our balcony, and looked down and over the most beautiful, the most magnificent scene that eyes, or at least my eyes, ever dwelt on. Beside us and before us the silver cup of the Sierra Nevada held the city in its tilted hollow, from which it poured out over the immeasurable Vega washed with moonshine and brightened and dark-

ened in its spread by a thousand radiances and obscurities of windows and walls and roofs and trees and lurking gardens. Because it was unspeakable we could not speak, but I may say now that this was our supreme moment of Granada. There were other fine moments, but none unmixed with the reservations which truth obliges honest travel to own. Now, when from some secret spot there rose the wild cry of a sentinel, and prolonged itself to another who caught it dying up and breathed new life into it and sent it echoing on till it had made the round of the whole magic city, the heart shut with a pang of pure ecstasy. One could bear no more; we stepped within, and closed the window behind us. That is, we tried to close it, but it would not latch, and we were obliged to ring for a *camerero* to come and see what ailed it.

The infirmity of the door-latch was emblematic of a temperamental infirmity in the whole hotel. The promises were those of Madrid, but the performances were those of Segovia. There was a glitter, almost a glare, of Ritz-like splendor, and the rates were Ritz-like, but there the resemblance ceased. The *concierge* followed us to our rooms on our arrival and told us in excellent English (which excelled less and less throughout our stay) that he was the hall-porter and that we could confidently refer our wants to him; but their reference seemed always to close the incident. There was a secretary who assured us that our rooms were not dear, and who could not out of regard to our honor and comfort consider cheaper ones; and then ceased to be until he receipted our bill when we went away. There was a splendid dining-room with waiters of such beauty and dignity, and so purple from clean shaving, that we scarcely dared face them, and there were luncheons and dinners of rich and delicate superabundance in the menu, but of an exquisite insipidity on the palate, and of a swiftly vanishing Barmecide insubstantiality as if they were banquets from the *Arabian Nights* imagined under the rule of the Moors. Everywhere shone silver-bright radiators, such as we had not seen since we left their like freezing in Burgos; but though the weather presently changed from an Andalusian softness to a Castilian severity after a snowfall in the Sierra, the radiators remained insensible to the difference and the air nipped the nose and fingers wherever one went in the hotel. The hall-porter, who knew everything, said the boilers were out of order, and a traveler who had been there the

winter before confirmed him with the testimony that they were out of order even in January. There may not have been any fire under them then, as there was none now; but if they needed repairing now it was clearly because they needed repairing then. In the corner of one of our rooms the plastering had scaled off, and we knew that if we came back a year later the same spot would offer us a familiar welcome.

But why do I gird at that hotel in Granada as if I knew of no faults in American hotels? I know of many and like faults, and I do not know of a single hotel of ours with such a glorious outlook and downlook as that hotel in Granada. The details which the sunlight of the morrow revealed to us when we had mastered the mystery of our window-catch and stood again on our balcony took nothing from the loveliness of the moonlight picture, but rather added to it, and, besides a more incredible scene of mountain and plain and city, it gave us one particular tree in a garden almost under us which my heart clings to still with a rapture changing to a fond regret. At first the tree, of what name or nature I cannot tell, stood full and perfect, a mass of foliage all yellow as if made up of "patines of bright gold." Then day by day, almost hour by hour, it darkened and the tree shrank as if huddling its leaves closer about it in the cold that fell from the ever-snowier Sierra. On the last morning we left its boughs shaking in the rain.

"Bare, ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang."

## V

But we anticipate, as I should say if I were still a romantic novelist. Many other trees in and about Granada were as yellow as that one, and the air hung dim with a thin haze as of Indian summer when we left our hotel in eager haste to see the Alhambra such as travelers use when they do not want some wonder of the world to escape them. Of course there was really no need of haste, and we had to wait till our guide could borrow a match to light the first of the cigarettes which he never ceased to smoke. He was commended to us by the hall-porter, who said he could speak French, and so he could, to the extreme of constantly saying, with a wave of his cigarette, "*N'est ce pas?*" For the rest he helped himself out willingly with my small Spanish; at the end he would have delivered us over to a dealer in antiquities hard by the gate of the palace if I had not pre-



vented him, as it were, by main force; he did not repine, but we were not sorry that he should be engaged by others for the next day.

Our way to the gate, which was the famous Gate of Justice and was lovely enough to be the Gate of Mercy, lay through the beautiful woods, mostly elms, planted there by the English early in the last century. The birds sang in their tops, and the waters warbled at their feet, and it was somewhat thrillingly cold in their dense shade, so that we were glad to get out of it, and into the sunshine where the old Moorish palace lay basking and dreaming. At once let me confide to the impatient reader that the whole Alhambra, by which he must understand a citadel, and almost a city, since it could, if it never did, hold twenty thousand people within its walls, is only historically and not artistically more Moorish than the Alcazar at Seville. Far nobler and more beautiful than its Arabic decorativeness in tinted stucco is the palace begun by Charles V., after a design in the spirit of the supreme hour of the Italian Renaissance. It is not ruinous in its long arrest, and one hears with hopeful sympathy that the Spanish king means some day to complete it. To be sure, the world is, perhaps, already full enough of royal palaces, but since they return sooner or later to the people whose pockets they come out of, one must be willing to have this palace completed as the architect imagined it.

We were followed into the Moorish palace by the music of three blind minstrels who began to tune their guitars as soon as they felt us: see us they could not. Then presently we were in the famous Court of the Lions, where a group of those beasts, at once archaic and puerile in conception, sustained the basin of a fountain in the midst of a graveled court arabesqued and honeycombed round with the wonted ornamentation of the Moors. The place was disappointing to the boy in me who had once passed so much of his leisure there, and had made it all marble and gold. The floor is not only gravel, and the lions are not only more like sheep, but the environing architecture and decoration are of a faded prettiness which cannot bear comparison with the fresh rougeing, equally Moorish, of the Alcazar at Seville. Was this indeed the place where the Abencerrages were brought in from supper one by one and beheaded into the fountain at the bidding of their royal host? Was it here that the haughty Don Juan de Vera, coming to demand for

the Catholic Kings the arrears of tribute due them from the Moor, " paused to regard its celebrated fountain " and " fell into discourse with the Moorish courtiers on certain mysteries of the Christian faith " ? So Washington Irving says, and so I once believed, with glowing heart and throbbing brow as I read how " this most Christian knight and discreet ambassador restrained himself within the limits of lofty gravity, leaning on the pommel of his sword and looking down with ineffable scorn upon the weak casuists around him. The quick and subtle Arabian witlings redoubled their light attacks on the stately Spaniard, but when one of them, of the race of the Abencerrages dared to question, with a sneer, the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin, the Catholic knight could no longer restrain his ire. Elevating his voice of a sudden, he told the infidel he lied, and raising his arm at the same time he smote him on the head with his sheathed sword. In an instant the Court of Lions glistened with the flash of arms," insomuch that the American lady whom we saw writing a letter beside a friend sketching there must have been startled from her opening words, " I am sitting here with my portfolio on my knees in the beautiful Court of the Lions," and if Muley Aben Hassan had not " overheard the tumult and forbade all appeal to force, pronouncing the person of the ambassador sacred," I am sure she never could have gone on.

## VII

I did not doubt the fact when I read of it under the level boughs of the beechen-tree with J. W., sixty years ago, by the green woodland light of the primeval forest which hemmed our village in, and since I am well away from the Alhambra again I do not doubt it now. I doubt nothing that Irving says of the Alhambra; he is the gentle genius of the place, and I could almost wish that I had paid the ten pesetas extra which the custodian demanded for showing his apartment in the palace. On the spot the demand of two dollars seemed a gross extortion; yet it was not too much for a devotion so rich as mine to have paid, and I advise other travelers to buy themselves off from a vain regret by giving it. If ever a memory merited the right to levy tribute on all comers to the place it haunts, Washington Irving's is that memory. His *Conquest of Granada* is still the history which one would wish to read; his *Tales of the*

*Alhambra* embody fable and fact in just the right measure for the heart's desire in the presence of the monuments they verify or falsify. They belong to that strange age of romance which is now so almost pathetic and to which one cannot refuse his sympathy without sensible loss. Except for the eager make-believe of that time we should still have to hoard up much rubbish which we can now leave aside, or accept without bothering to assay for the few grains of gold in it. Washington Irving had just the playful kindness which sufficed best to deal with the accumulations of his age; if he does not forbid you to believe, he does not oblige you to disbelieve, and he has always a tolerant civility in his humor which comports best with the duty of taking leniently a history impossible to take altogether seriously. Till the Spaniards had put an end to the Moorish misrule, with its ruthless despotism and bloody civil brawls, the Moors deserved to be conquered; it was not till their power was broken forever that they became truly heroic in their vain struggles and their unavailing sorrows. Then their pathetic resignation to persecution and exile lent dignity even to their ridiculous religion.

The Alhambra is not so impressive by its glory or grandeur as by the unparalleled beauty of its place. If it is not very noble as an effect of art, the inspiration of its founders is affirmed by their choice of an outlook which commands one of the most magnificent panoramas in the whole world. It would be useless to rehearse the proofs, but I bid the reader think of far-off silver-crested summits and of a peopled plain stretching away from them out of eye-shot, dense first with roofs and domes and towers, and then freeing itself in fields and vineyards and orchards and forests to the vanishing-point of the perspective; think of steep and sudden plunges into chasms at the foot of the palace walls, and one crooked stream stealing snake-like in their depths; think of whatever splendid impossible dramas of topography that he will, of a tremendous map outstretched in colored relief, and he will perhaps have some notion of the prospect from the giddy windows of the Alhambra; and perhaps not. Of one thing beyond the gulf of the Darro we made memorably sure, and that was the famous gipsy quarter which the traveler visits at the risk of his life in order to have his fortune told. At the same moment we made sure that we should not go any nearer it, for though we knew

that it was insurpassably dirty as well as dangerous, we remembered so distinctly the loathsomeness of the gipsy quarter at Seville that we felt no desire to put it to the comparison.

## VIII

We preferred rather the bird's-eye study of the beautiful Generalife which our outlook enabled us to make, and which we supplemented by a visit the next day. We preferred, after the Barmecide lunch at our hotel, taking the tram-car that noisily and more noisily clambers up and down, and descending into the town by it. The ascent is so steep that at a certain point the electric current no longer suffices, and the car bites into the line of cogs with its sort of powerful under-jaw and so arrives. Yet it is a kindly little vehicle, with a conductor so affectionately careful in transporting the stranger that I felt after a single day we should soon become brothers, or at least half-brothers. Whenever we left or took his car, after the beginning or ending of the cogway, he was alert to see that we made the right change to or from it, and that we no more overpaid than underpaid him. Such homely natures console the traveler for a thousand inhospitalities of travel, and bind races and religions together in spite of patriotism and piety.

We were going first to the Cartuja, and in the city, which we found curiously much more modern, after the Latin notion, than Seville, with freshly built apartment-houses and business blocks, we took a cab, not so modern as to be a taxicab, and drove through the quarter said to have been assigned to the Moors after the fall of Granada. The dust lay thick in the roadway where filthy children played, but in the sunny doorways good mothers of families crouched taking away the popular reproach of vermin by searching one another's heads. Men bestriding their donkeys rode fearlessly through the dust, and one cleanly-looking old peasant woman, who sat hers plumply cushioned and framed in with a chair-back and arms, showed a patience with the young trees planted for future shade along the desperate avenue which I could wish we had emulated. When we reached the entrance of the old Carthusian Convent, long since suppressed and its brothers exiled, a strong force of beggarmen waited for us, but a modest beggarwoman, old and sad, had withdrawn to the church door, where she shared in our impartial alms. We were admitted to the cloister,

rather oddly, by a young girl, who went for one of the remaining monks to show us the church. He came with a newspaper (I hope of clerical politics) in his hand, and distracted himself from it only long enough to draw a curtain, or turn on a light, and point out a picture or statue from time to time. But he was visibly anxious to get back to it, and sped us more eagerly than he welcomed us in a church which upon the whole is richer in its peculiar treasures of painting, sculpture, especially in wood, costly marble, and precious stones than any other I remember. According to my custom, I leave it to the guide-books to name these, and to the abounding critics of Spanish art to celebrate the pictures and statues; it is enough for me that I have now forgotten them all except those scenes of the martyrdom inflicted by certain Protestants on members of the Carthusian brotherhood at the time when all sorts of Christians felt bound to correct the opinions of all other sorts by the cruelest tortures they could invent. When the monk had put us to shame by the sight of these paintings (bad as their subjects), he put us out, letting his eyes fall back upon his newspaper before the door had well closed upon us.

The beggarmen had waited in their places to give us another chance of meriting heaven; and at the church door still crouched the old beggarwoman. I saw now that the imploring eyes she lifted were sightless, and I could not forbear another alms, and as I put my copper big-dog in her leathern palm I said, "*Adios, madre.*" Then happened something that I had long desired. I had heard and read that in Spain people always said at parting, "Go with God," but up to that moment nobody had said it to me, though I had lingeringly given many the opportunity. Now, at my words and at the touch of my coin this old beggarwoman smiled beneficently and said, "Go with God," or, as she put it in her Spanish, "*Vaya usted con Dios.*" Immediately I ought to have pressed another coin in her palm, with a "*Gracias, madre; muchas gracias,*" out of regard to the literary climax; but whether I really did so I cannot now remember; I can only hope I did.

I think it was while I was still in this high satisfaction that we went a drive in the promenade, which in all Spanish cities is the Alameda, except Seville, where it so deservedly is the Delicias. It was in every way a contrast to the road we had come from the Cartuja: an avenue

of gardened paths and embowered driveways, where we hoped to join the rank and fashion of Granada in their afternoon's outing. But there was only one carriage besides our own with people in it, who looked no greater world than ourselves, and a little girl riding with her groom. On one hand were pretty villas, new-looking and neat, which I heard could sometimes be taken for the summer at rents so low that I am glad I have forgotten the exact figures lest the reader should doubt my word. Nothing but the fact that the winter was then hanging over us from the Sierras prevented my taking one of them for the summer that had passed, the Granadan summer being notoriously the most delightful in the world. On the other hand stretched the wonderful Vega, which covers so many acres in history and romance, and there, so near that we look down into them at times were "the silvery windings of the Xenil," which glides through so many descriptive passages of Irving's page; only now, on account of the recent rain, its windings were rather coppersy.

## IX

At the hotel on the terrace under our balcony we found on our return a party of Spanish ladies and gentlemen drinking tea, or whatever drink stood for it in their custom: no doubt chocolate; but it was at least the afternoon-tea hour. The women's clothes were just from Paris, and the men's from London, but their customs, I suppose, were national; the women sat on one side of the table and talked across it to the men, while they ate and drank, and then each sex grouped itself apart and talked to its kind, the women in those hardened vowels of a dialect from which the Andalusians for conversational purposes have eliminated all consonants. The sun was setting red and rayless, with a play of many lights and tints, over the landscape up to the snow-line on the Sierra. The town lay a stretch of gray roofs and white walls, intermixed with yellow poplars and black cypresses, and misted over with smoke from the chimneys of the sugar factories. The mountains stood flat against the sky, purple with wide stretches of brown, and dark, slanting furrows. The light became lemon-yellow before nightfall, and then a dull crimson under pale violet.

The twifter of the Spanish women was overborne at times by the voices of an American party whose presence I was rather proud of as another American. They were all young

men, and they were making an educational tour of the world in the charge of a professor who saw to it that they learned as much of its languages and history and civilization as possible on the way. They ranged in their years from about fifteen to twenty and even more, and they were preparing for college, or doing what they could to repair the loss of university training before they took up the work of life. It seemed to me a charming notion, and charming the seriousness with which they were fulfilling it. They were not so serious in everything as to miss any incidental pleasure; they had a large table to themselves in our refulgent banquet-hall, where they seemed always to be having a good time, and where once they celebrated the birthday of one of them with a gaiety which would have penetrated, if anything could, the chill of the other diners. In the evening we heard them in the billiard-room below lifting their voices in the lays of our college muse, and waking the strains of our national ragtime. They were never intrusively cheerful; one might remain, in spite of them, as dispirited as the place would have one; but as far as the *genius loci* would let me, I liked them; and so far as I made their acquaintance I thought that they were very intelligently carrying out the enterprise imagined for them.

## X

I wish now that I had known them well enough to ask them what they candidly thought of the city of which I felt the strange witchery under the dying day on the afternoon which I have left celebrating for the moment. It seems to me at this distance of time and space that I did not duly reflect that in places it was a city which smelled very badly and was almost as dirty as New York in others, and very ill paved. The worst places are in the older quarters, where the streets are very crooked and very narrow, so narrow that the tram-car can barely scrape through them. They are old enough to be streets belonging to the Moorish city, like many streets in Cordova and Seville, but no fond inquiry from our guides could identify this lane or that alley as of Moorish origin. There is indeed a group of picturesque shops clearly faked to look Moorish, which the lover of that period may pin his faith to, and for a moment I did so, but upon second thought I unpinned it.

We visited this plated fragment of the old Moorish capital

when we descended from our hotel with a new guide to see the great, the stupendous cathedral, where the Catholic Kings lie triumphantly entombed in the heart of their conquest. It is altogether unlike the other Spanish cathedrals of my knowledge; for though the cathedral of Valladolid is of Renaissance inspiration in its austere simplicity, it is somehow even less like that of Granada than the Gothic fanes of Burgos or Toledo or Seville. All the detail at Granada is classicistic, but the whole is often of Gothic effect, especially in the mass of those clustered Corinthian columns that lift its domes aloof on their prodigious bulk, huge as that of the grouped pillars in the York Minster. The white of marble walls, the gold of altars, the colors of painted wooden sculpture form the tones of the place, subdued to one bizarre richness which I may as well leave first as last to the reader's fancy; though, let his fancy riot as it will, it never can picture that gorgeousness. Mass was saying at a side altar as we entered, and the music of stringed instruments and the shrill voices of choir-boys pierced the spaces here and there, but no more filled them than the immemorable sculptural and pictorial facts: no more than a certain very lively bishop kneeling on his tomb and looking like George Washington; or than a St. Jerome in the Desert, outwrinkling age, with his lion curled cozily up in his mantle; or than the colossal busts of Adam and Eve and the praying figures of Ferdinand and Isabel, richly gilded in the exquisite temple forming the high altar; or than the St. James on horseback, with his horse's hoof planted on the throat of a Moor; or than the Blessed Virgins in jeweled crowns and stomachers and brocaded skirts; or than that unsparingly realistic decapitation of John the Baptist bloodily falling forward with the severed gullet thrusting at the spectator. Nothing has ever been too terrible in life for Spanish art to represent; it is as ruthlessly veracious as Russian literature; and of all the painters and sculptors who have portrayed the story of Christianity as a tale of torture and slaughter, the Spaniards have studied it closest from the fact; perhaps because for centuries the Inquisition lavished the fact upon them.

The supreme interest of the cathedral is, of course, the Royal Chapel, where on a sunken level Ferdinand and Isabel lie, with their poor mad daughter Joan and her idolized unfaithful husband Philip the Fair, whose body she bore about



with her while she lived. The picture postal has these monuments in its keeping and can show them better than my pen, which falters also from the tremendous retablo of the chapel, so dense with the agonies of martyrdom and serene with the piety of the Catholic Kings kneeling placidly amid the horrors. If the picture postal will not supply these, or reproduce the many and many relics and memorials which abound there and in the sacristy—jewels and vestments and banners and draperies of the royal camp-altar—there is nothing for the reader but to go himself and see. It is richly worth his while, and if he cannot believe in a box which will be shown him as the box Isabel gave Columbus her jewels in merely because he has been shown a reliquary as her hand-glass, so much the worse for him. He will not then merit the company of a small choir-boy who efficiently opens the iron gate to the crypt and gives the custodian as good as he sends in back-talk and defiantly pockets the coppers he has earned. Much less will he deserve to witness the homely scene in an area outside of the Royal Chapel, where many milch goats are assembled, and when a customer comes, preferably a little girl with a tin cup, one of the mothers of the flock is pinioned much against her will by a street boy volunteering for the office, and her head held tight while the goatherdess milks the measure full at the other end.

Everywhere about the cathedral beggars lay in wait, and the neighboring streets were lively with bargains of prickly pears spread open on the ground by old women who did not care whether any one bought or not. There were also bargains in palmistry; and at one place a delightful humorist was selling clothing at auction. He allured the bidders by having his left hand dressed as a puppet and holding a sparkling dialogue with it; when it did not respond to his liking he beat it with his right hand, and every now and then he rang a little bell. He had a pleased crowd about him in the sunny square; but it seemed to me that all the newer part of Granada was lively with commerce in ample, tram-trodden streets which gave the shops, larger than any we had seen out of Madrid, a chance uncommon in the narrow ways of other Spanish cities.

The guide, to whom we had fallen in the absence of our French-speaking guide of the day before, spoke a little English, and he seemed to grow in sympathetic intelligence as the

morning passed. He made our sight-seeing include visits to the church of St. John of God, and the church of San Geronimo, which was built by Gonsalvo de Cordova, the Great Captain, and remains now a memorial to him. We rang at the door, and after long delay a woman came and let us into an interior stranger even than her being there as custodian. It was frescoed from floor to ceiling everywhere, except the places of the altars now kept by the painted retablos and the tombs and the statues of the various saints and heroes. The retablo of the high altar is almost more beautiful than wonderful, but the chief glory of the place is in the kneeling figures of the Great Captain and his wife, one on either side of the altar, and farther away the effigies of his famous companions-in-arms, and on the walls above their heraldic blazons and his. The church was unfinished when the loyal Captain died in the displeasure of his ungrateful king, and its sumptuous completion testifies to the devotion of his wife and her taste in choosing the best artists for the work.

I have still the sense of a noonday quiet that lingered with us after we left this church and which seemed to go with us to the Hospital of St. John of God, founded, with other hospitals, by the pious Portuguese, who, after a life of good works, took this name on his well-merited canonization. The hospital is the monument of his devotion to good works, and is full of every manner of religious curio. I cannot remember to have seen elsewhere so many relics under one roof, both bones of holy men and women, idols of the heathen brought from Portuguese possessions in the East which are now faded from the map, as well as the body of St. John of God shrined in silver in the midst of all.

## XI

I do not know why I should have brought away from these two places a peacefulness of mind such as seldom follows a visit to show places, but the fact is so; perhaps it was because we drove to and from them, and were not so tired as footworn sight-seers are, or so rebellious. One who had seen not only the body of St. John of God, but his cane with a whistle in it to warn the charitable of his coming and attune their minds to alms-giving, and the straw basket in which he collected food for the poor, now preserved under an embroidered satin covering, and an autograph

letter of his framed in glass and silver, might even have been refreshed by his experience. At any rate, we were so far from tired that after luncheon we walked to the Garden of the Generalife, and then walked all over it. The afternoon was of the very mood for such a visit, and we passed it all there in those walks and bowers, and the black cypress aisles, and the trees and vines yellowing to the fall of their leaves. The melancholy laugh of water chasing down the steep channels and gurgling through the stone rails of stairways was everywhere, and its dim smile gleamed from pools and tanks. In the court where it stretched in a long basin an English girl was painting and another girl was sewing, to whom I now tardily offer my thanks for adding to the charm of the place. Not many other people were there to dispute our afternoon's ownership. I count a peasant family, the women in black shawls and the men wearing wide, black sashes, rather as our guests than as strangers; and I am often there still with no sense of molestation. Even the reader who does not conceive of a garden being less flowers and shrubs than fountains and pavilions and porches and borders of box and walls of clipped evergreens, will scarcely follow me to the Generalife or outstay me there. The place is probably dense with history and suffocating with association, but I prefer to leave all that to the imagination where my own ignorance found it. Of the whole Alhambra group the Generalife was strangest to me. A painter had told me once of his spending a summer in it, and he showed some beautiful pieces of color in proof, but otherwise I came to it with a blank surface on which it might photograph itself without blurring any earlier record. This, perhaps, is why I love so much to dwell there on that never-ending afternoon of late October. It was long past the hour of its summer bloom, but the autumnal air was enriching it beyond the dreams of avarice with the gold which prevails in the Spanish landscape wherever the green is gone, and we could look out of its yellowing bowers over a landscape immeasurable in beauty. Of course, we tried to master the facts of the Generalife's past, but we really did not care for them and scarcely believed that Charles V. had doubted the sincerity of the converted Moor who had it from Ferdinand of Aragon, and so withheld it from his heirs for four generations until they could ripen to a genuine Christianity at Genoa, whither they withdrew and became the patrician

family now its proprietors. The arms of this family decorate the roof and walls of the colonnaded belvedere from which you look out over the city and the plain and the mountains; and there are remnants of Moorish decoration in many places, but otherwise the Generalife is now as Christian as the noble Pallavicini who possess it. There were plenty of flower-beds, box-bordered, but there were no flowers in them; the flowers preferred standing about in tall pots. There was an arbor overhung with black forgotten grapes before the keeper's door and in the corner of it dangled ropes of fire-red peppers.

This detail is what, with written help, I remember of the Generalife, but no feature of it shall fade from my soul. From its embowered and many-fountained height it looks over to the Alhambra, dull red, and the city wall climbing the opposite slope across the Darro to a church on the hill-top which was once a mosque. The precipice where the garden clings plunges sheer to the river-bed with a downlook insurpassably thrilling; but the best view of the city is from the flowery walk that runs along the side of the Alcazaba, which was once a fortress and is now a garden, long forgetful of its office of defending the Alhambra palace. From this terrace Granada looks worthy of her place in history and romance. We visited the Alcazaba after the Generalife, and were very critical, but I must own the supremacy of this prospect. I should not mind owning its supremacy among all the prospects in the world.

## XII

Meanwhile our shining hotel had begun to thrill with something besides the cold which nightly pierced it from the snowy Sierra. This was the excitement pending from an event promised the next day, which was the production of a drama in verse, of peculiar and intense interest for Granada, where all the scene of it was laid in the Alhambra at one of the highest moments of its history, and the persons were some of those dearest to its romance. Not only the company come to perform it (of course the first company in Spain) had been in the hotel overnight, the ladies of it gleaming and glooming through the cold corridors, but the poet had been conspicuous at dinner, with his wife, young and beautiful and blond, and powdered so white that her blondness was of quite a violet cast. There was not so much

a question of whether we should take tickets as whether we could get them, but for this the powerful interest of our guide availed, and he got tickets providentially given up in the morning for a price so exorbitant I should be ashamed to confess it. They were for the afternoon performance, and at three o'clock we went with the rest of the gay and great world of Granada to the principal theater.

The Latin conception of a theater is of something rather more barn-like than ours, but this theater was of a sufficiently handsome presence, and when we had been carried into it by the physical pressure exerted upon us by the crowd at the entrance we found its vastness already thronged. The seats in the orchestra were quickly taken; the gallery under the roof was loud with the impatience for the play which the auditors there testified by cries and whistlings and stampings until the curtain lifted; the tiers of boxes rising all round the theater were filled with family parties. Family parties they literally were, with the fathers and mothers in front and the children between them of all ages down to babies in their nurses' arms. These made themselves perfectly at home, in one case reaching over the edge of the box and clawing the hair of a gentleman standing below and openly enjoying the joke. The friendly equality of the prevailing spirit was expressed in the presence of the family servants at the back of the family boxes, from which the latest fashions showed themselves here and there, as well as the belated local versions of them. In the orchestra the men had promptly lighted their cigars and the air was blue with smoke. Friends found one another, to their joyful amaze, not having met since morning; and especially young girls were enraptured to recognize young men; one girl shook hands twice with a young man, and gurgled with joy as long as he stood near her.

As a lifelong lover of the drama and a boyish friend of Granadan romance, I ought to have cared more for the play than the people who had come to it, but I did not. The play was unintentionally amusing enough; but after listening for two hours to the monotonous cadences of the speeches which the persons of it recited to one another, while the ladies of the Moorish world took as public a part in its events as if they had been so many American Christians, we came away. We had already enjoyed the first entr'acte, when the men all rose and went out, or lighted fresh cigars and went

to talk with the Paris hats and plumes or the Spanish mantillas and high combs in the boxes. The curtain had scarcely fallen when the author of the play was called before it and applauded by the generous, the madly generous, spectators. He stood bowing and bowing on tiptoes, as if the wings of his rapture lifted him to them and would presently fly away with him. He could not drink deep enough of the delicious draught put brimming to his lips, and the divine intoxication must have lasted him through the night, for after breakfast the next morning I met him in our common corridor at the hotel smiling to himself, and when I could not forbear smiling in return he smiled more; he beamed, he glowed upon me as if I were a crowded house still cheering him to the echo. It was a beautiful moment, and I realized even better than the afternoon before what it was to be a young poet and a young Spanish poet, and to have had a first play given for the first time in the city of Granada, where the morning papers were now glowing with praise so ardent that their print all but smoked with it.

I was on my way down-stairs to witness the farewell scene between the leading lady and the large group of young Granadans who had come up to see her off. When she came out to the carriage with her husband, by a delicate refinement of homage they cheered him, and left him to deliver their devotion to her, which she acknowledged only with a smile. But not so the leading lady's lady's-maid, when her turn came to bid good-by from our omnibus window to the assembled upper servants of the hotel. She put her head out and said in a voice hoarse with excitement and good-fellowship, "*Adios, hombres!*" ("Goodby, men!"), and vanished with us from their applaudive presence.

With us, I say, for we, too, were leaving Granada in rain which was snow on the Sierra and so cold that we might well have seemed leaving Greenland. The brave mules which had so gallantly, under the lash of the running foot-boy beside them, galloped uphill with us the moonlight night of our coming, now felt their anxious way down in the dismal drizzle of that last morning, and brought us to the plaza before the station. Here there was a wide puddle where I thought our craft should have floundered, but it made its way to the door, and left us dry shod enough within and glad to be quitting the city of my young dreams.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS.